

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS AT
HANDLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Handley Church of Christ for celebrating its 100th anniversary. This is a great accomplishment, and I am proud to have an establishment such as this in the 26th Congressional District of Texas.

In 1905, J. Dan Thomas invited several families to meet at his house for a worship service; this was the first meeting of the congregation of the Handley Church of Christ. Soon after, the congregation grew and became too large for the Thomas home.

Throughout the years, the congregation continued to grow and with that came the need for more space. In 1919, the church moved to a frame building with seating for 60 people. With church membership listed as 150, there was still not sufficient room. The congregation has since stayed on that property and continually added to and remodeled the building.

Today, the sanctuary will seat 1,000 people and the property includes an educational building as well as a building consisting of classrooms. The church will commemorate its 100 years by unveiling a Texas State historical marker.

As its founders intended, the Handley Church of Christ endures today as an example of a pioneer institution which has adapted itself to new surroundings and times without compromising traditional beliefs and values. As one of Tarrant County's oldest churches, it occupies an important place in the Handley community today as a symbol of endurance, stability and service.

Congratulations to the congregation at Handley Church of Christ on their anniversary. One hundred years of worship is a milestone to be celebrated.

AN EXCELLENT OP-ED ARTICLE
ON HURRICANE KATRINA

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention an excellent op-ed article that appeared last week in the New York Times by David Brooks titled, "Katrina's Silver Lining." The op-ed article points out that the devastation which occurred earlier this month along the Gulf region now presents us with the challenge to address the roots of poverty in the United States.

Poverty was the underlying cause of the tragedy that occurred in Louisiana a couple of weeks ago. Many of the people who were unable to evacuate did not have the economic means to flee the hurricane that destroyed their city and countless lives. An individual's financial circumstance should not get in the way of life and death decisions. Low-income families should not be forced to risk their safety and well-being simply because they do not have the financial means to protect themselves.

Addressing the tragedy that occurred in New Orleans will take more than rebuilding the city's infrastructure. In order to ensure that the human suffering that has occurred never happens again, we need to address the high rates of poverty that exist in this Nation.

Every American should have the right to live a better life. We must ensure that everyone has the ability to adequately care for their families. Moreover, we need to ensure that every American has access to educational opportunities which lead to greater outcomes. And we must ensure that no one is forced to make a life and death decision based on their financial circumstance.

Early estimates suggest that thousands of Americans may have perished as a result of Hurricane Katrina and the events that occurred after the storm, while many others were injured. The families that were forced to remain in Louisiana during the storm have finally been evacuated and now faced with the difficult task of rebuilding their lives. Sadly, many of them are also desperately searching for missing loved ones.

In the wake of this disaster, let us move forward with an aggressive agenda to eradicate poverty in the United States. Let us rise to the challenge that Hurricane Katrina presented to us by removing the hurdles that force too many families to live in poverty. We can do this. The survivors of Hurricane Katrina, and the millions of other Americans who are living in poverty, deserve nothing less.

[From the New York Times, Sept. 8, 2005]

KATRINA'S SILVER LINING

(By David Brooks)

As a colleague of mine says, every crisis is an opportunity. And sure enough, Hurricane Katrina has given us an amazing chance to do something serious about urban poverty.

That's because Katrina was a natural disaster that interrupted a social disaster. It separated tens of thousands of poor people from the run-down, isolated neighborhoods in which they were trapped. It disrupted the patterns that have led one generation to follow another into poverty.

It has created as close to a blank slate as we get in human affairs, and given us a chance to rebuild a city that wasn't working. We need to be realistic about how much we can actually change human behavior, but it would be a double tragedy if we didn't take advantage of these unique circumstances to do something that could serve as a spur to antipoverty programs nationwide.

The first rule of the rebuilding effort should be: Nothing Like Before. Most of the ambitious and organized people abandoned the inner-city areas of New Orleans long ago, leaving neighborhoods where roughly three-quarters of the people were poor.

In those cultural zones, many people dropped out of high school, so it seemed normal to drop out of high school. Many teenage girls had babies, so it seemed normal to become a teenage mother. It was hard for men to get stable jobs, so it was not abnormal for them to commit crimes and hop from one relationship to another. Many people lacked marketable social skills, so it was hard for young people to learn these skills from parents, neighbors and peers.

If we just put up new buildings and allow the same people to move back into their old neighborhoods, then urban New Orleans will become just as rundown and dysfunctional as before.

That's why the second rule of rebuilding should be: Culturally Integrate. Culturally Integrate. Culturally Integrate. The only

chance we have to break the cycle of poverty is to integrate people who lack middle-class skills into neighborhoods with people who possess these skills and who insist on certain standards of behavior.

The most famous example of cultural integration is the Gautreaux program, in which poor families from Chicago were given the chance to move into suburban middle-class areas. The adults in these families did only slightly better than the adults left behind, but the children in the relocated families did much better.

These kids suddenly found themselves surrounded by peers who expected to graduate from high school and go to college. After the shock of adapting to the more demanding suburban schools, they were more likely to go to college, too.

The Clinton administration built on Gautreaux by creating the Moving to Opportunity program, dispersing poor families to middle-class neighborhoods in five other metropolitan areas. This time the results weren't as striking, but were still generally positive. The relocated parents weren't more likely to have jobs or increase their earnings (being close to job opportunities is not enough—you need the skills and habits to get the jobs and do the work), but their children did better, especially the girls.

The lesson is that you can't expect miracles, but if you break up zones of concentrated poverty, you can see progress over time.

In the post-Katrina world, that means we ought to give people who don't want to move back to New Orleans the means to disperse into middle-class areas nationwide. (That's the kind of thing Houston is beginning to do right now.)

There may be local resistance to the new arrivals—in Baton Rouge there were three-hour lines at gun shops as locals armed themselves against the hurricane victims moving to their area—but if there has ever been a moment when people may open their hearts, this is it.

For New Orleans, the key will be luring middle-class families into the rebuilt city, making it so attractive to them that they will move in, even knowing that their blocks will include a certain number of poor people.

As people move in, the rebuilding effort could provide jobs for those able to work. Churches, the police, charter schools and social welfare agencies could be mobilized to weave the social networks vital to resurgent communities. The feds could increase earned-income tax credits so people who are working can rise out of poverty. Tax laws should encourage business development.

We can't win a grandiose war on poverty. But after the tragedy comes the opportunity. This is the post-Katrina moment. Let's not blow it.

COMMENDING DEPAUL UNIVERSITY'S
RESPONSE TO HURRICANE KATRINA

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud recognition of DePaul University of Chicago. Founded in 1898, DePaul is the nation's largest Catholic University. This institution has a long history of public service, and is continuing this tradition in its extraordinary response to Hurricane Katrina by offering compassion, assistance, and educational opportunities to students affected by this national crisis.

Once it became clear that Hurricane Katrina would disrupt the education of thousands of students attending universities located along the Gulf Coast, DePaul University opened its doors. As of September 9, DePaul had accepted 150 displaced students.

DePaul has offered special tuition grants to their visiting students, requesting that they make tuition payments to their home university. DePaul has also taken steps to secure additional financial aid for these students.

The students at DePaul have also taken action to help victims of Hurricane Katrina. By September 9, these students had raised more than \$5,000 to purchase supplies to be sent to the Gulf Coast. Many campus groups, including student athletes, Student Leaders Emerging, S.A.V.E., and DePaul chapters of the NAACP and Target Hope, have organized relief efforts. Other DePaul students are exploring ways to assist displaced Gulf Coast residents who have migrated to Chicago after evacuating from their homes.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation is faced with an unprecedented challenge. Caring for the victims of Hurricane Katrina and helping them rebuild their lives will require the dedication of all Americans. I am proud of the efforts of the students, faculty and administration of DePaul University in response to this national tragedy, and of similar efforts in colleges and universities throughout Chicago and across the country.

HONORING EVA HALLER AND COUNTERPART INTERNATIONAL

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize a great organization, Counterpart International, and a tireless advocate, Eva Haller.

For 40 years Counterpart International has done extraordinary work, first helping South Pacific countries move from colonialism to independence, and then expanding their efforts to assist the growth of democracy in Africa, Latin America, Eurasia, and around the Caribbean. This global organization's strategy is to engage people in their own communities through education and exchange programs that teach the skills necessary for citizens to strengthen their homeland's independence from within.

Counterpart also brings together and draws upon the support of governments, corporations, and individuals to accomplish this goal. Their approach relies on "smart partnerships" which engage all sectors and benefit all participants. These two principles increase the likelihood of success where other development programs fail.

Another key element in Counterpart's success is my dear friend and constituent Eva Haller. As a board member of Counterpart she has emphasized a focus on women, the environment, and preservation of cultures. She is a passionate and tenacious advocate for all people who need help, be they children, poverty stricken families, or the populations of far off land struggling to become free. With her international outlook she knows that those of us who live in the United States, the wealthiest country in the world, have a special duty

to be generous with our time, money, and cares.

Eva is a tremendous example for us all to live up to and I am proud to recognize the incredible work that she does on her own and with Counterpart International. It is no accident that the organization will honor Eva, among others, at its 40th anniversary benefit reception in New York on September 21. In these trying times there is more and more need for the leadership that Eva and Counterpart International exemplify.

THE POVERTY LEVEL IN OUR NATION IS UNACCEPTABLE—IT IS TIME FOR A CHANGE

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 15, 2005

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about poverty in our nation—the harsh reality of which played out painfully for all of the world to see after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast region.

The televised images of hardship, death and despair from New Orleans may have opened the doors to this nation's reservoir of compassion—but something more than a momentary outpouring of conscience will be required to keep those doors from slamming shut again once the television spotlights dim.

Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath revealed the harsh realities of poverty in America. The heartbreaking visions of lost children searching for their families, elderly people trapped in their homes, diabetics suffering without their insulin and corpses floating in the streets have the potential to become a transforming event.

That potential will be realized, however, only if Americans of conscience join together in a national movement to end poverty in America.

Once again, a generation of Americans must find within ourselves the courage, optimism and organizational skills that will allow us to demand an end to the poverty that underscored the New Orleans tragedy—and to make permanent our demand for positive change.

The road toward achieving this goal must begin, as all missions of change begin, in our personal experience as a people. Consider two families who have been transformed by the New Orleans disaster—whom I will call the Jones and Smith families. I am using fictitious names and relaying a blended story to protect their privacy—but quite frankly Mr. Speaker their stories are a common refrain from the Katrina fallout.

Prior to this storm, Mr. and Mrs. Jones lived in public housing with their three children. Neither parent had a high school diploma and—as a result—they lived in a neighborhood surrounded by unemployment and poverty.

If it had not been for Hurricane Katrina, the Jones family might never have met the Smiths, a middle-aged couple who live in an upscale suburban home hundreds of miles away.

The Smiths were haunted by the suffering that they were witnessing on their television screen. Called to take action by their church, they reached out to the Jones family and gave them a place to live in the basement of their home. The impact of their generosity has been profound.

Before the storm and the flood, Mr. Jones had been unemployed due to layoffs at the New Orleans oil refinery where he had worked. Now, one of Mr. Smith's neighbors, a lumber yard supervisor, has given Mr. Jones a job—and the Smiths are helping the Jones family research GED programs that can help them get even better jobs.

Across America, churches and good people like the Smiths are coming together to provide the shelter, warm meals, clothing and other help that will allow many of the survivors of Hurricane Katrina to rebuild their lives. School districts have opened their classrooms to the more than 372,000 students displaced by the storm. Government and non-profit organizations are holding job fairs to help those who have been displaced find employment.

We cannot remake the past, but we can give meaning to the staggering toll of those who have suffered and died as a result of this national tragedy. That is what the Smith family is doing, and they deserve our applause.

Yet, if the debacle in New Orleans is truly to become a "tipping point" that guides this nation toward a more just and humane society, something more than individual acts of compassion will be required.

Consider these facts. In New Orleans before the storm, three out of every ten residents lived below the poverty line—and at least 37 million Americans (including 13 million American children) are now living in poverty nationwide.

In fact, the number of Americans falling into poverty increased again last year for the fourth straight year. While the economy grew 3.8%, median income has remained flat for the fifth straight year at \$44,389. Income inequality is at an all time high with 50.1 percent of income going to the top 20 percent of households—where only the top 5 percent of income earners saw an increase in real income gains in 2004 according to the Economic Policy Institute.

Mr. Speaker, it is an undisputable fact that many of the victims of Hurricane Katrina were victims of poverty and neglect.

However, I believe like many of my colleagues that they should not have to wait for our compassion until another disaster brings with it their televised deaths in our streets.

At the federal level, we must demand that those who now control both the Congress and the White House back up the words of compassion that they speak. That is why I have joined House Minority Leader NANCY PELOSI in urging that the House Republicans set aside their plan to cut the federal budget by \$35 billion to help pay for another \$70 billion tax cut for the rich.

Americans need to know that, while the Republican leadership expresses compassion for this nation's poorest citizens, they are planning to cut \$10 billion from Medicaid, \$9 billion from federal student aid, and additional tens of billions of dollars from the federal food stamp program, public housing assistance, Head Start, public education and job training programs.

As a nation, we can do better than this. Shortly after the New Orleans tragedy touched our Nation, I offered this challenge to the Bush Administration and its allies in the Congress.

"We cannot allow it to be said by history," I declared at a Washington press conference, "that the difference between those who lived and those who died in the great storm and